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PEACEKEEPING; THE OPERATIONAL CONCERNS

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: David A. Kelley

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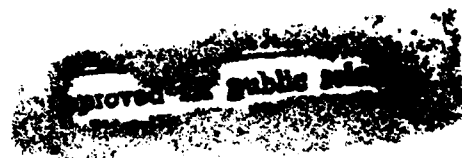
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Abstract of  
PEACEKEEPING; THE OPERATIONAL CONCERNS

This paper examines some of the concerns that an operational commander must consider in conducting a peacekeeping operation. The United States National Security Strategy pledges greater American involvement in peacekeeping operations and the United States military is gradually responding to this commitment. The unique aspects of peacekeeping operations are addressed, highlighting their differences from "the American way of war." United States experience in peacekeeping operations is very limited, creating the need for education and training enhancements. This paper emphasizes ground operations although the operational concerns would be fundamentally the same for maritime peacekeeping operations. Peacekeeping operations are inherently dangerous due to their unique nature, and require a distinctly different approach than other military operations, at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The operational commander must maintain a firm grasp of the special considerations at each of the levels in order to facilitate achievement of the strategic objectives.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This paper will discuss some of the difficulties encountered by the operational commander in conducting peacekeeping operations. The end of the Cold War has forced the United States to grapple with its role as the single most powerful nation in the world and the responsibilities inherent in that position. Political, social, economic, and military changes have forced the United States to reassess how it deals with the world community.

The military threat has shifted from global nuclear warfare with the Soviet Union to a variety of regional crises around the world, and the focus of national security and military strategy have likewise changed. Cutbacks in operating forces and budgets are ongoing and the United States has pledged greater activism in peacekeeping roles around the world.

This shift in focus has been a gradual process. For example, the National Security Strategy published by then President Bush in January of 1993 used the term peacekeeping as a potential mission for United States armed forces no fewer than nine times throughout the text. By contrast, the National Military Strategy published one year earlier did not mention peacekeeping at all. Assuming that the forthcoming National Military Strategy will specifically address

peacekeeping to some extent, indicates the gradual shift in focus from large conventional warfare to operations other than war, including peacekeeping.

United States Security Assistance funding is also indicative of the increased emphasis on peacekeeping operations. In Fiscal Year (FY) 1980, \$22 million was budgeted for peacekeeping operations. Funding grew to \$34 million in FY 1986 before leveling out at \$28 million for FY 1992. Security Assistance funding for peacekeeping operations in FY 1994 is at an all-time high of \$77.2 million.<sup>1</sup> Much of the justification for this increase in funding rests with the United Nations' increased activity in peacekeeping related operations since the end of the Cold War. Thirteen peacekeeping operations were conducted by the United Nations between 1945 and 1987, while the same number was carried out between 1988 and January 1992. In fact, of the 8.3 billion spent by the United Nations on peacekeeping operations through January 1992, about \$3 billion was committed in the last twelve month period alone.<sup>2</sup> "At the beginning of 1992, there were 11,500 U.N. Peacekeepers worldwide, today there are 72,000."<sup>3</sup>

President Bush, in an address to the United Nations General Assembly on September 21, 1992, outlined the following measures that the United States would take in support of peacekeeping type operations:

- support efforts to strengthen the ability of the U.N. to prevent, contain, and resolve conflict;
- support NATO, CSEC, WEU, CIS and others to develop peacekeeping capabilities;
- train its forces for the "full range of peacekeeping and humanitarian relief" which will be conducted with the U.N.;
- inform the U.N. on the availability of its unique military response capabilities and encourage other nations to provide information on logistics, training, equipment, etc.. to enhance readiness and interoperability;
- promote multilateral peacekeeping training exercises, simulations and leadership development, and make facilities available for such purposes.<sup>4</sup>

President Clinton supported the Bush position during his inaugural address by stating "when our vital interests are challenged or the will or conscience of the international community are defied, we will act - with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with force when necessary."<sup>5</sup> President Clinton came to office on a platform dedicated to a domestic agenda and suffered setbacks in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia-Herzegovina within the first months of his term. As a result, he made the following statement to the U.N. General Assembly in September; "If the American people are to say yes to U.N. peacekeeping, the United Nations must know when to say no."<sup>6</sup>

Although the President's position clearly acknowledges the need for scrutiny in choosing the situations appropriate for U.N. peacekeeping operations, his administration remains firmly in support of the need and value of peacekeeping.

In summation, it is readily apparent that an increased emphasis is being placed upon peacekeeping operations at the political/strategic level. Military leaders must now ensure

that corresponding military strategy follows suit. This change will require a major redirection at both the operational and tactical levels -- a redirection that will ultimately rest with the operational commander to implement.



## CHAPTER II

### TERMINOLOGY AND CHARACTERISTICS

Terminology. A lack of common terminology and definitions exists regarding peacekeeping and related missions. In recent years the United States military has taken measures to bring their terminology more in line with that of the United Nations. The lack of universal terminology can result in a lack of common understanding between operational and strategic leaders, whether in unilateral or multinational operations. This would logically jeopardize unity of effort in the operation.

Peacekeeping. In U.N. terminology, peacekeeping is the use of military personnel as monitors or observers under restricted rules of engagement once a cease-fire has been negotiated. Joint Publication 3-07.3 (Final Draft), JTTP for Peacekeeping Operations, provides the following definition, "Efforts taken with the consent of the civil or military authorities of the belligerent parties in a conflict to maintain a negotiated truce in support of diplomatic efforts to achieve or maintain peace."

The Department of Army definition in FM 100-5 Operations, states that "peacekeeping operations support diplomatic efforts to maintain peace in areas of potential conflict." It goes on to explain that peacekeeping operations "stabilize

conflicts between two belligerent nations and requires the consent of all parties involved in the dispute."

Two subtle differences exist between the Joint and Army definitions. The Army definition presupposes that peace already exists upon the entry of peacekeeping forces, while the Joint definition acknowledges that nothing more than a cease-fire may exist. The second disparity between the definitions is that the Army defines the belligerents of a peacekeeping effort as two separate nations whereas the Joint definition refers instead to "parties". History supports the Joint definition in that many peacekeeping operations have been employed to maintain peace between "parties" within a single nation.

Peacekeeping has also been called "an extraordinary military art because it calls for the use of soldiers not to fight and win, but to prevent fighting, to maintain cease fires, and to provide order while negotiations are being conducted."<sup>1</sup> This unique characteristic forces the operational commander, his strategic superiors, and his tactical subordinates to work with terms and definitions common to all if they hope to be successful. The Joint definition of peacekeeping is the basis for all further discussion in this paper.

Peace Enforcement. As defined by the Joint Staff, "peace enforcement entails the physical interposition of armed forces to separate ongoing combatants to create a cease-fire that

does not exist." This definition closely resembles the United Nations definition for peace enforcement.

Peacemaking. This term is included to show the reader the large disparity in definitions in some cases. According to the United Nations, peacemaking generally means using mediation, conciliation, arbitration or diplomatic initiatives to peacefully resolve a conflict. In contrast, the Joint Publication for Peacekeeping defines peacemaking as "a type of peacetime contingency operation intended to establish or restore peace and order through the use of force." The term peacemaking obviously means two entirely different things to the U.N. and U.S. military forces. For the U.N., peacemaking implies diplomatic action; for the United States operational commander, peacemaking implies the need to initiate crisis action planning.

#### Characteristics of Peacekeeping Operations.

- 1) They occur with the consent, cooperation, and support of the belligerents to the conflict.
- 2) Because these operations have a recognized mandate from both the participants and the international community, their legitimacy acts to deter hostilities directed against them.
- 3) Peace keeping forces assume that the use of force will not be required to carry out their tasks, except in self defense. They are structured, trained and equipped under this assumption.
- 4) Peace keeping forces possess a quality called the "hostage effect." Lightly armed and operating under restrictive rules of engagement, the peace keeping force derives protection from the belligerents by its inability to change the military balance and its non-threatening posture.<sup>2</sup>

The principal key to success in peacekeeping operations is impartiality on the part the peacekeeping force.

Impartiality can equate to some extent with unfamiliarity. The "perfect" peacekeeping force would be provided by a distant nation with no vital interests in the area of the peacekeeping operation.

## CHAPTER III

### PREVIOUS U. S. EXPERIENCE IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Germane to the discussion of the operational difficulties for the Commander in peacekeeping operations is the experience United States forces have previously garnered from such operations. Since World War II, the United States has participated in and supported many different peacekeeping operations. These include most of those sponsored by the United Nations, as well as the Multi National Forces and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai, and the Multinational Force (MNF) in Beirut.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to note that the vast majority of U.S. involvement in U.N. peacekeeping missions has been in the form of financial or logistical support, not troop support. In fact, the United States has contributed military observers to only three U.N. sponsored peacekeeping activities.<sup>2</sup> United States involvement in non-U.N. operations proclaimed as peacekeeping operations actually fail to pass the criteria established by peacekeeping definitions.

#### Dominican Republic.

One example of American experience in peacekeeping is the Dominican Republic intervention of 1965. The United States, however, did not enter the Dominican Republic at that government's request, nor was the U.S. primarily interested in providing peace for the Dominican Republic factions involved.

President Johnson's policy goals for the intervention in the Dominican Republic were, in order of importance:

to prevent the establishment of another "Castroite" government; to establish a stable, democratic, and strongly anti-communist regime; and to pressure the Organization of American States (OAS) into creating the machinery for collective action against Communist or radical dictatorial expansion in the region.<sup>3</sup>

These goals do not represent the unbiased, impartial goals of a peacekeeper. However, after the intervention and peace-enforcement operations, United States forces maintained peace with an interposition force until the OAS could establish the Inter American Peace Force (IAPF). Although termed a peacekeeping operation, in reality, actions taken unilaterally by the U.S. and then collectively by the IAPF were more akin to peace enforcement than peacekeeping.

Arguably, a lesson learned was that this deescalation from a peace enforcement role down to a peacekeeping level is the preferable modus-operandi for United States forces. It allowed the forces to demonstrate U. S. military prowess at the outset of the intervention, which in turn facilitated subsequent U.S. efforts in maintaining the peace they had obtained.

#### Multinational Force (MNF) - Beirut, 1982-1984

The Multinational Force in Beirut from 1982 to 1984 provides another example of American peacekeeping. Marines were initially sent ashore by President Reagan as part of a Multinational Force,

to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces as they carry out the orderly and safe departure of Palestinian personnel in the Beirut area in a manner which will further the restoration of the sovereignty and authority of the Government of Lebanon in the Beirut area.<sup>4</sup>

The length of the operation was not to exceed thirty days, and actually lasted about two weeks. Shortly after the departure of the Multinational Force in September of 1982, Christian factions entered west Beirut and laid waste to the Sabra and Shatilla Palestinian camps.

The Multinational Force returned, this time with the mandate "to provide an interposition force at the agreed locations and thereby provide the multinational presence requested by the Lebanese Government to assist it and the Lebanese Armed Forces in the Beirut area."<sup>5</sup>

Two factors serve to make this operation something other than a traditional peacekeeping operation. First, the American forces and other multinational forces entered at the request of the Lebanese government which did not adequately control the country or represent the factions that were a party to the conflict. Accordingly, this intervention did not enjoy the consent of all the belligerents. Secondly, the Multinational Force entered Lebanon with the stated purpose of assisting the Lebanese Government and its Army in restoring order and sovereignty. From the outset the U.S. was seen as an ally of the Lebanese government and not as an impartial observer.

These factors represent the greatest lessons to be drawn from the Beirut experience. Before entering a peacekeeping operation, the operational commander must be reasonably confident that his forces have the consent of all belligerents to serve in a peacekeeping mode, and that the mandate provides the scenario under which those forces may remain impartial.

#### Sinai Multinational Force and Observer

The Sinai Multinational Force and Observer represents the shining star in U.S. peacekeeping involvement to date. In 1981 the United States, with Egyptian and Israeli concurrence, took the unprecedented step of establishing a multinational peacekeeping force without the approval or mandate from the United Nations.<sup>6</sup> The operation began in April of 1982, and the United States Army has continually maintained a battalion sized unit in the MFO since that time. The success of this peacekeeping effort is based on several factors, the foremost being that the MFO was formed with the mutual consent of the conflicting parties. There was also adequate time (about four years) to organize and plan the details of the MFO, including development of an effective chain of command.

#### Somalia

Recent experience in Somalia brings to light an additional consideration for the operational commander, essentially that "peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance have become inextricably linked."<sup>7</sup> Few if any, future peacekeeping forces will enter a crisis area that has not been



wracked by strife and disorder. Humanitarian assistance will need to be provided to some degree to the local inhabitants without jeopardizing the impartiality of the force.

Previous U.S. experience in peacekeeping operations has given the operational commander of future peacekeeping missions a variety of factors to consider. Most notably, the U.S. has repeatedly overlooked the importance of consent and impartiality as fundamental criteria for a successful peacekeeping operation. The commander must work closely with the strategic leaders to identify these shortcomings in the future. This point is critical, for it is at this early stage that the strategic, operational, and tactical levels become crucially interdependent.

Peace operations, with their primarily political rather than military goals, demand closer and more continuous coordination between the appointed political authority and the military commander than in war to insure that military objectives achieve political objectives while protecting the force, its legitimacy, and its neutrality.<sup>8</sup>

## CHAPTER IV

### STRATEGIC FACTORS AFFECTING THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

#### The Weinberger and Powell Doctrines<sup>1</sup>

The Weinberger Doctrine of 1984 and the Powell Doctrine of 1991 are responses to U.S. military experiences in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War respectively. Both address the criteria under which U.S. forces should be committed to combat situations, but fail to address the criteria for committing U.S. forces to low intensity conflicts, including peacekeeping operations. Yet, most military and civilian critics of the employment of United States Armed Forces and the operations they undertake use these doctrines to measure success.

Some observers conclude that U.S. Forces are ill-suited to conduct general peacekeeping operations. It is said that this is especially true in a United Nations controlled environment because "the nature of the U.N. coalition roles and missions are at variance with American military character, doctrine, traditions, and the concepts of both decisive force and victory."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Weinberger Doctrine states that the U.S. should commit forces to combat only if; 1)vital interests are at stake;2)the intention is to win;3)there are clearly defined political and military objectives;4)there is a continual reassessment between objectives and the military means employed to obtain them;5)there is wide public and Congressional support;6)it is a last resort. The Powell Doctrine calls for the use of combat forces only when prepared to use "overwhelming force" to achieve decisive victory.

The United States operational commander has the principles of these doctrines ingrained in his thinking as "the way to do business." In a peacekeeping mission, the operational commander will have to change that mindset and gain an appreciation of the unique risks associated with the employment of military forces outside the criteria defined in those doctrines. For instance, peacekeeping forces may be assigned to an area where no vital U.S. interests are at stake, particularly when acting as part of a U.N. force. Furthermore, by definition, in a peacekeeping operation the intent is to maintain the peace so use of overwhelming force to achieve decisive victory is not an issue. Also contradictory to the Weinberger Doctrine, the use of American forces in a peacekeeping operation may not be a last resort. Use of peacekeeping forces can foster the political and diplomatic "environment" conducive to resolving a conflict, and therefore can be viewed as an opportunity to be seized immediately as opposed to being a last resort.

#### Impartiality

"Traditionally, peacekeeping worked well ... because peacekeepers were accepted as neutrals whose stated purpose was to assist in muting conflicts and mediating between conflicting parties."<sup>2</sup> Impartiality may be extremely difficult for U.S. forces to achieve regardless of the circumstances or degree of moral intent underlying their

employment. The U.S. has historically refrained from peacekeeping missions for this very reason.

The U.S. has never provided an individual contingent to a U.N. peacekeeping operation because of a deliberate policy by the U.N. to rely upon small non-aligned nations for the bulk of its peacekeeping forces. Another reason is the perception that superpower participation may escalate, rather than reduce the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

The United States is viewed throughout the globe as a superpower and can easily be perceived as having vital interests in every region of the world. For instance, the average U.S. citizen may not recognize the name of a third world nation, but the vast majority of inhabitants of third world nations know of the United States, and also hold some preconceived notion of how the U.S. impacts their daily life.

Despite the end of the Cold War, it seems that little has changed between the relationships of the U.S. to the majority of the worlds nations. Can the U.S. ever really be accepted as a neutral agent? Can the U.S. transition its forward deployed deterrent forces into acceptable peacekeepers? The answer is yes, but not in every situation. The link between the strategic and tactical levels is paramount in a peacekeeping operation to assess the viability of American forces for a specific situation. The operational commander for a peacekeeping operation should be a critical player in the early stages of strategic planning to ensure that United States forces enter peacekeeping operations only when they have a high degree of certainty that those forces will be viewed as impartial to all belligerents.

In operations where the perception of U.S. intent and impartiality is characterized by skepticism among either of the belligerents, the operational commander may have to take special precautions to foster the desired perception of U.S. impartiality. Such measures might include "tightening" the rules of engagement or adjusting tactical procedures in an effort to win the support of the people. Such actions might very well lessen his forces' ability to accomplish their mission or adequately protect themselves.

#### Popular Support

Americans prefer the world to be a peaceful place where human rights are respected and the right to self determination is available to individuals and nations alike. When entering into a military operation, Americans desire (and often expect) a short confrontation with an outcome favorable to the United States. Initial popular support for military operations is generally proportionate to the moral intention with which the operation is waged. For instance, popular support for the entry of United States forces into Somalia was extremely high because the intent of the operation, to provide food to starving Somalians, furnished a highly moral justification for such action.

On the other hand, American popular support for military operations tends to wane when these operations either fail to meet expectations for success or exceed the anticipated timeframe. Examples include the Korean and Vietnam conflicts,

the Multinational Force in Lebanon, and current operations in Somalia. For the operational commander of a peacekeeping operation, American popular support will be an important issue, since peacekeeping operations imply the need for long term, sustained effort.<sup>4</sup>

Based on history, an operational commander can expect a steady decrease in popular support for lengthy peacekeeping operations. The reduction in popular support will be proportionally accelerated by the number of American casualties, and the perceived lack of U.S. vital interests in the area.

## CHAPTER V

### TACTICAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

#### Training

Military forces trained for combat operations do not necessarily make productive peacekeepers.<sup>1</sup> The United States operational commander for a peacekeeping operation will not only need to retrain himself and his staff, but also the forces in his charge. American forces are educated and trained as warriors in the art and science of winning wars. They are inundated with training which corresponds well with the Weinberger and Powell Doctrines and is centered around the principles of war, maneuver, centers of gravity, decisive points and the like.

For the peacekeeper the mission is no longer successfully waging war, it is effectively preventing it. Very little effort is devoted at any level to the study and conduct of peacekeeping operations from a strategic, operational, or tactical perspective. Evidence does indicate, however, that steps are slowly being taken to broaden such efforts. The development of Joint Publication 3-07.3 (JTTP for Peacekeeping Operations), still in draft form, is evidence of the military response to emerging National Security Strategy roles and missions. Although the study of peacekeeping operations will never warrant the degree of attention that is dedicated to the study of conventional warfighting, it is a mistake to assume

that proficiency in warfighting automatically makes one a master of operations other than war.

Peacekeeping operations are quite different from conventional war operations and demand a distinct approach, as well as mindset, at all levels. "Peacekeeping is to war-making what acting is to ballet - the environment is similar but the techniques are very different."<sup>2</sup> The operational commander must mold his warfighting forces into peacekeeping forces. In so doing, he knowingly detracts from their warfighting capabilities to some degree.

The operational commander must ensure that his political leaders understand the type of tactical force at their disposal, as well as the limitations of such a force. This force will likely lack the equipment, assets, and in many cases, the current training to effectively shift from a peacekeeping mission to a peace enforcement mission, or some other mission normally associated with that type of unit in a conventional environment. For example, the United States Battalion in the Sinai lacks the organic indirect fire assets necessary to conduct conventional offensive or defensive missions. Similarly,

the result of confusing roles and forces has been most evident in the placing of U.N. peacekeeping forces into Sarajevo in a peace-enforcement situation where they have proven - unsurprisingly - not to be up to a task for which they were unprepared.<sup>3</sup>

The American military approach to peacekeeping has been to train for it when necessary. This was the case with the



follow-on Marines participating in the Multinational Force in Beirut, and is the case for the Army battalions participating in the Sinai MFO. Peacekeeping pre-deployment training for the Army Infantry units participating in the Sinai MFO covers twenty four subjects and takes approximately 243 hours.<sup>4</sup> Of that 243 hours, only 50 hours constitute unique peacekeeping training, 40 hours of which are dedicated to an Arabic language familiarization course. So aside from the need to gain some language proficiency, which is a sound requirement, the United States military concludes that participants need one good training day (10 hours) to prepare for a peacekeeping operation.

Ten hours of peacekeeping training is certainly not enough to change the mindset of the American warrior, and although this may suffice for the Battalion deploying to the Sinai where neither Egypt nor Israel is likely to violate the agreement being enforced, it should not become the model by which future commanders for peacekeeping operations ensure their tacticians are prepared.

Peacekeepers must be statesmen as well as soldiers. Peacekeeping, more than any other military mission requires patience, understanding, tact, and sincerity, preferably right down to the individual peacekeeper.

Every soldier assigned to peacekeeping duties ideally, would be a linguist who is part politician, part diplomat, and a genuinely decent person who can be respected by all parties to the conflict and who is intellectually capable of understanding the issue without becoming emotionally aligned with one point of view. All

peacekeepers should be fully qualified soldiers who are mature and disciplined.<sup>5</sup>

Americans, in general fail to appreciate other nations' peoples, customs, traditions, religions, languages and the like. The operational commander can expect his tactical forces to be comprised of a cross-section of American culture rather than a group of "ideal" peacekeepers as described above. He must understand the nature and limitations of his force, and employ the force with those factors in mind.

#### "Time" and "Objective" Factors

The operational commander for a peacekeeping force will confront unique challenges regarding these factors that can increase the difficulty of peacekeeping operations over conventional military operations. Time considerations and "objectives" are closely linked between the strategic, operational and tactical levels in peacekeeping operations, and often provide contradictory benefits amongst these levels. At the strategic level the objective is to develop a suitable diplomatic solution leading to peace and stability in the shortest time possible, thereby negating the need for continued use of peacekeeping forces.

For the tactical peacekeepers, either an interposition force or observers, this translates into an objective of maintaining the status quo for an indefinite period. Extended periods of time may be necessary to achieve the political goals, as diplomatic processes have historically been slow and tedious. Tactical peacekeepers provide the time necessary to

accomplish the strategic objective, however, time itself provides no advantage at the tactical level.

In peacekeeping operations, time can be a distinct disadvantage. One or more of the belligerent parties may have consented to a peacekeeping operation in order to gain a respite to rebuild its forces or refocus its efforts for future actions against the opposing belligerent. As an example,

for a few months after the Marines arrived in Beirut the Lebanese natives sheathed their swords, lowered their voices and sat on their hatreds, while these clean-cut men from a distant land spoke to them about the meaning of democracy, freedom, and patriotism.<sup>6</sup>

Time in this case became a weapon against the tactical-level peacekeepers used by the belligerents to prepare for future hostilities, an obvious disadvantage for the peacekeepers.

Peacekeeping operations, being political, limit the options available to the commander in terms of establishing tactical and operational objectives. Political players have a much greater role in establishing the lower level objectives in peacekeeping operations as opposed to other types of operations, primarily because even a single tactical faux-pas can cause strategic failure. Objectives are established to maintain the existing peace, not to force a peace or punish a belligerent who gets out of line. Operational and tactical objectives are measured not by progress, but by a lack of action. The less things change, the better.

In peacekeeping operations, political leaders may greatly inhibit the operational commander's flexibility in a variety of ways, such as restrictive force structure and inflexible rules of engagement. Accordingly, the operational commander lacks the freedom he usually enjoys in establishing objectives and gaining the initiative to create the military conditions that will achieve the strategic goals. He must closely monitor, and influence, the tactical as well as diplomatic activity to ensure that they are mutually supporting.

The problems associated with these "time" and "objective" factors become cyclical. Problems at the tactical level can easily result in setbacks at the strategic level causing the diplomatic process to stall, or formulate new objectives. A diplomatic setback will likely result in the decrease in popular support already discussed, as well as a new set of challenges for the operational commander in linking the tactical and strategic levels.

## CHAPTER VI

### COUNTERARGUMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Counterargument

Some military analysts purport that peacekeeping operations are among the easiest missions for a military force to accomplish. A peacekeeping force's "mission is rather simple and straightforward; it is therefore a well defined and generally supported mission."<sup>1</sup> This statement is relatively accurate, provided that no changes to the situation occur. Activities that are very difficult in conventional war scenarios, such as logistics, communications, and control can be simple in a passive peacekeeping operation where the situation remains unchanged.

However, the following scenarios would complicate the situation: if one or more belligerents become dissatisfied with the diplomatic process; if the peacekeepers violate their neutrality; if the nations providing forces become disgruntled with the time commitment; or if the local inhabitants are suffering unreasonable hardship in some manner. Should any of the aforementioned occur, the mission is no longer simple and straightforward.

Operational commanders of peacekeeping operations must be constantly aware of the volatility of such operations. Historically, successful peacekeeping operations have occurred when the situation remained unchanged. Herein lies the

challenge for the operational commander - maintaining the status quo to allow sufficient time for diplomatic efforts to come to fruition.

The peacekeeping force is saddled with restrictions as previously noted. The rules of engagement represent a restriction placed on the peacekeeping force, not on the belligerents. As peacekeepers, the force has limited capability to adjust its mission to peace enforcement as mentioned earlier. The force therefore becomes limited in its ability to influence the action, or to adequately react to an uprising on the part of a belligerent.

The peacekeeping force is essentially static, able only to protect itself. Unlike other missions, peacekeeping does not allow the operational commander to seize or maintain the initiative in a role other than self defense. The initiative lies at the strategic level, and with the belligerents. Because of the nature of the operations, peacekeeping forces themselves cannot ensure the success of the operation. However, through an act of aggression or impartiality, they can singlehandedly cause its failure.

Peacekeeping operations should be recognized as difficult and challenging missions. The operational commander will certainly not enter a peacekeeping mission with a pessimistic view of his chances for success, but he must be prepared to respond to the unique, adverse situations that can arise.

## Conclusion

Operational art translates theater strategy and design into operational design which links and integrates the tactical battles and engagements that, when fought and won, achieve the strategic aim. In its simplest expression, operational art determines when, where, and for what purpose major units will fight.<sup>2</sup>

From this definition, one could conclude that there is no operational art in a peacekeeping operation since there is no intention to either fight or win. On the other hand, one could argue that operational art is especially critical to a peacekeeping operation since the strategic and tactical levels are so closely linked. This paper supports the latter position. An operational commander whose primary concern is effecting a marriage between the strategic and tactical levels is crucial to the success of a peacekeeping operation.

The operational commander must avoid the confusion caused by a lack of common terminology in soliciting specific guidance from the strategic level, and in issuing clear and concise orders to the tactical level. He must understand the uniqueness of the mission and avoid applying conventional warfighting doctrine and principles to its execution. He must work with strategic leaders to ensure that his forces will enter a peacekeeping situation where they are viewed as truly neutral by the belligerents, and the commander must set forth guidance for the tactical peacekeepers to ensure that neutrality is not jeopardized.

The operational commander must also realize that his peacekeeping forces will lack the education, training, and

experience in these specialized missions and develop plans accordingly. He must appreciate the time consuming nature of peacekeeping operations and the disadvantages that accompany such a commitment. Finally, he must understand that United States presence can provide a lucrative political target to a belligerent who becomes disgruntled with the peacekeeping process.

The operational commander who plans and prepares to overcome the aforementioned obstacles positions himself to succeed in a peacekeeping operation in any environment. A single sentence best summarizes the challenge that confronts the operational commander of a peacekeeping mission:

"Peacekeeping is not a soldier's job, but only a soldier can do it."<sup>3</sup>



## NOTES

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